by what was left of our workers after 8,000,000 had been taken away either for the Army and Navy or for their munitionment and supply. The task of supreme difficulty for the Government was to secure that every man should be used where he would be of greatest value. It was a task never fully carried out; though in the last two years of the War considerable progress was made towards its achievement. As the War developed, as the military and naval demands became greater and man-power decreased through casualties, the problem in all belligerent countries became more and more urgent.

Our lack of plan to Start with

The ideal would have been for the whole population to be conscripted at the very outbreak of the War, and every man posted forthwith in accordance with a wisely thought-out plan to the job where he would be of most service to our war effort. But such a war as that of 1914-18 had never been experienced or foreseen, much less planned for even by the militarist nations of the Continent. As for us, we had relied on our Navy to keep off the invader. Our Army was just a police force for the Empire. Protected by the moat, our whole national temper had been tuned to the organisation and tasks of peace. So our early war efforts were spasmodic and largely incoherent. Men were allowed to go abroad in our fighting forces who were vitally wanted at home,

while others who could far better have been spared for the Army, proceeded to regard themselves as indispensable at home. Indispensability was largely a question of individual choice and disposition and not of national interest. The peace-time organisations of industry, both capital and labour, were maintained for lack of any well-planned system to replace them.